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Senate Chamber, Lansing, Thursday, April 2, 2009.

10:00 a.m.

Protest

Senator Patterson, under his constitutional right of protest (Art. 4, Sec. 18), protested against the passage of House Bill No. 4258 and moved that Senators George's and Cropsey's statements made during the discussion of the bill be printed as his reasons for voting "no."

The motion prevailed.

Senator George's statement, in which Senator Patterson concurred, is as follows:

I'm also going to vote in favor of House Bill No. 4258, but I want to point out a couple of features of the federal stimulus package which I think we should examine in a little more detail. The first is how these monies are distributed between the states. You will recall that the entire stimulus package is \$787 billion. We have 300 million residents in the United States and that amounts to about \$2,500 per capita. We're all borrowing \$2,500 per person and we're donating to the stimulus. Then it's being redistributed. What is Michigan getting back? Well, we're getting back \$18.5 billion. That's about \$1,850 per person. We're borrowing \$2,500 per person and we're getting \$1,800 back. We're a donor state. The \$18.5 billion represents 2.3 percent of the \$787 billion, whereas we're 3 percent of the nation's population. So we're a donor state to the stimulus package.

The Governor has said that Michigan will have lost 750,000 jobs by the end of 2010. The country as a whole will have lost 4 million. So we account for about 20 percent of the jobs lost nationwide. If the stimulus package was really directed at the source of the problem, we would be getting 20 percent of the package. That would be eight times more than we are actually receiving. Consider the response to Hurricane Katrina. The levee repair was focused on where the problem was—the Gulf Region. It wasn't spread around the country. There was no levee repair in the Great Lakes.

You'll recall that in February we passed Senate Resolution No. 6, where we asked our state's federal delegation to try and link the stimulus package to the unemployment rates of the states, which would have given us our fair share. But did that happen? No. Either our U.S. Senators didn't hear us, or they were simply unsuccessful in getting our state its fair share.

Now let's look at the actual program. There are 36 separate funding formulas in this bill under consideration—36. How are they linked to the collapse of the auto industry? If we were designing this, how might we have done it? Well, let's look at some of the things we have done. We've dedicated research dollars for our universities. We've dedicated research dollars for advance battery work and high-tech work and other auto-related research in our 21st Century Jobs Fund. We've created tax incentives for businesses and for auto industry research, such as our advanced battery package. We've created tax incentives for brownfield redevelopment. Perhaps the federal government might have followed that lead, it might have created incentives for refitting antiquated or idle manufacturing facilities, or perhaps created tax incentives or grants for the purchase of new equipment.

But, no, that didn't happen. What do we actually get in these 36 programs? Well, we have grants for crime assistance, for victims' assistance, and compensation grants. We have grants for senior citizen nutrition services, for school lunch equipment. We have independent living grants. We have a grant for the Michigan Commission for the Blind we have pollution prevention grants. We have grants for leaking underground storage tank cleanup. We have grants related to water pollution and drinking water. We have some arts and culture grants. There's a grant for the Stop Violence Against Women program. There's a program to expand the federal Americorp volunteers. There's funding for federal anti-drug initiatives and weatherization assistance.

So that's all fine and good, colleagues. Those are all, perhaps, fine programs, but what do they have to do with the remedying of Michigan's economic woes? They do not help fix the auto industry or our state's beleaguered economy. They do not help retool our automotive plants nor employ displaced autoworkers. They do not address the root cause of Michigan's problems.

So our troubled state receives neither its fair share, nor is the share that it is receiving directed at the source of its problem. So I am voting for the package, colleagues, but I'm disappointed that, unfortunately, it is misdirected and will not fix Michigan's economy.

Senator Cropsey's statement, in which Senator Patterson concurred, is as follows:

I agree wholeheartedly with the previous Senator from the 20th District. One of the things for which I have had a major concern is if this stimulus package goes through, was to make sure that it really goes to people who are really in need or that

it stimulates the economy. There was an amendment that was put on that said that this was not supposed to be used for political organizing. There is also a good amendment on transparency on this. Now, if for some reason the administration seems to funnel money to ACORN or to the Triangle Foundation or any one of the other extreme liberal organizations that I believe are trying to, in many cases, subvert our election process and subvert our way of life here, it should come to this body's attention. It should come to the attention to the people of the state of Michigan.

With that in mind, I will be voting for this. Just because I am voting for this bill does not mean that I think it has been good policy on what Washington, D.C., has done. We are put in an interesting situation of having \$1 trillion go onto our debt that our children and grandchildren will be paying for. The question becomes does Michigan, because Congress is foisting this upon us and foisting this debt upon us, then say no we are not going to be taking the money that we are going to be paying for? So we really have no choice.

I just want everybody to know that I think it has been tragic what Washington, D.C., has done; that they think they can spend themselves out of a recession. That has never been true before. I doubt if it will be true this time. If they are going to be throwing money around, then Michigan needs to take its share because we and our children and grandchildren will be paying for the excesses that are going on in Washington, D.C., at this time.

Senators George and Cropsey asked and were granted unanimous consent to make statements and moved that the statements be printed in the Journal.

The motion prevailed.